



## LOS ANGELES COUNTY REGIONAL PARK AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

October 7, 2008

The Honorable Board of Directors  
Los Angeles County  
Regional Park and Open Space District  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Directors:

**AMEND THE SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY'S PROJECT LIST  
PURSUANT TO SECTION (3), SUBSECTION (d) OF THE SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD  
PARKS PROPOSITION OF 1996, ALLOCATE SPECIFIED EXCESS GRANT FUNDS  
AVAILABLE TO THE FIFTH SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT FOR THE ACQUISITION  
AND DEVELOPMENT OF LAND IN LOPEZ CANYON AND  
AUTHORIZE ADMINISTRATION OF AN EXCESS FUNDS GRANT  
(FIFTH DISTRICT - 3 - VOTE MATTER)**

### **SUBJECT**

These actions will allocate \$5,000,000 in Specified Excess Funds available to the Fifth Supervisorial District to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy to enable the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, acting on behalf of the Conservancy to purchase 125.66 acres of vacant land in Lopez Canyon in the San Gabriel Mountains. As done previously, prior to the acquisition, the parcels will be added to the Conservancy's project list and the parcels have been reviewed for their potential impact on County sanitary landfill sites, roads and highways, and conformity with County planning documents. A further \$500,000 will fund habitat restoration, access to trails and improvements to visitor facilities and existing structures on a former equestrian center on the property.

### **IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:**

1. Find the proposed actions exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act, for the reasons cited herein.

2. Amend the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy's project list, most recently amended by your Board on September 9, 2008, to add the acquisition of 125.66 acres in Lopez Canyon in the San Gabriel Mountains in unincorporated Los Angeles County.
3. Allocate Specified Excess Funds available to the Fifth Supervisorial District in the amount of \$5,500,000 to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for the Lopez Canyon Acquisition and Development Project.
4. Authorize the Director of Parks and Recreation, in his capacity as Director of the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District, to award a grant to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) for the above acquisition project when applicable conditions have been met and to administer the grant as of the date of this action and pursuant to procedures in the Procedural Guide for the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (Conservancy).

#### **PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

Approval of the recommended actions would add 10 parcels totaling 125.66 acres of land in the San Gabriel Mountains to the Conservancy's project list, as well as fund the acquisition of these parcels. The parcels in the San Gabriel Mountains, protecting core habitat, are located in Lopez Canyon adjacent to the Angeles National Forest and will link Pacoima Motorway and Indian Canyon trails. They will also provide a regionally significant link in the Rim of the Valley Trail between Pacoima and Kagel Canyons. The recommended actions would allocate \$5,000,000 in Specified Excess Funds available to the Fifth Supervisorial District to the Conservancy and allow the transfer of the grant funds to the MRCA for the acquisition of the 10 parcels in the Lopez Canyon Acquisition and Development Project.

The property contains an equestrian center no longer in use. An additional \$500,000 in Specified Excess Funds would fund the development of the property through MRCA for habitat restoration, improved public access, a hiking and equestrian trail, construction of a trailhead and related facilities and the rehabilitation of utility and equestrian structures and the existing residence for potential ranger housing (Attachment A).

The 1996 Proposition requires that agencies to which funds were allocated under the Safe Neighborhood Parks Propositions of 1992 and 1996 encumber all such funds prior to receiving grants of Excess Funds. The Conservancy and the MRCA meet this requirement.

It is also recommended that the Director of Parks and Recreation be authorized to award a grant to the MRCA, when applicable conditions have been met, such as grantee qualifications, consistency between the projects and requirements of the 1996 Proposition, as well as grantee agreement with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements for the project, and to administer the grant under procedures previously approved by your Board.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS**

The proposed actions further the Board approved County Strategic Plan Goal No. 1 (Service Excellence), Goal No. 4 (Fiscal Responsibility), Goal No. 5 (Children and Family Well-being), and Goal No. 6 (Community Services), by contributing toward the acquisition and development of additional open space land for habitat protection and trails accessibility in Lopez Canyon in the Fifth Supervisorial District.

### **FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING**

Sufficient appropriation for the grant, in the amount of \$5,500,000, is budgeted in the Fifth Supervisorial District portion of the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space Districts' Excess Funds Project Fund, HD6.

### **FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

The 1996 Proposition requires that funds provided to the Conservancy be expended "solely for projects approved by the Board, pursuant to such criteria as the Board may, in its discretion, adopt," provided that those projects are identified in the Conservancy's annual work program transmitted to the Governor and State Legislature and as may be amended from time to time, after a noticed public hearing. Following these procedures, the Lopez Canyon parcels were added to the annual work program in September of 2000.

The 1996 Proposition further provides that your Board may disapprove a project within the boundaries of a city only upon a finding that the acquisition or improvement may impact access to or use of a site identified or proposed for present or future sanitary landfill purposes. In addition, your Board previously has adopted procedural requirements requiring a review of proposed Conservancy projects relative to their impact on existing or proposed highways, and their consistency with General or Area Plans.

The proposed acquisition project meets the procedural requirements of the 1996 Proposition and has been reviewed in accordance with the Conservancy's revised Procedural Guide, adopted by your Board on June 17, 1997.

The Department of Public Works (DPW) has found that the proposed acquisitions would not negatively impact current or potential future County sanitary landfill sites. However, DPW noted that two parcels APN Nos. 2581-013-009 and 010 appear to be within 200 feet of active, abandoned, or idle oil or gas wells. County Building Code requires that buildings or structures adjacent to or within 200 feet of such wells be protected against methane gas intrusion. For construction of any enclosed structures on the two referenced parcels, DPW's Environmental Programs Division must be contacted for issuance of necessary permits. MRCA will comply with the requirement for the issuance of necessary permits for construction of any enclosed structures on the two parcels (Attachment B).

In its review of any planned County roads or highways affecting the 10 parcels in Lopez Canyon in the requested Board action, DPW made the following comment in its revision of September 9, 2008, to Attachment B: Since the Department of Regional Planning reports that the proposed land use designations and zoning for the properties along Lopez and Kagel Canyons will not result in a level of development to warrant the roadway classification of a Limited Secondary Highway, DPW will recommend that Lopez Canyon Road and Kagel Canyon Road be downgraded to local collector streets and will be removed from the Highway Plan. There will not be any future impacts to the subject parcels as a result of any development or construction of any highway depicted on the Highway Plan (Attachment C).

The Department of Regional Planning researched the list of proposed parcels for acquisition, consulted with County Counsel and expressed no reservations about the proposed acquisitions (Attachment D). However, County Counsel noted that there is pending civil litigation relating to the property, APN No. 2581-013-008, between a former tenant and the seller. The County is a non-party, and thus the potential lawsuit has no impact on the acquisition or the prospective land purchaser, MRCA.

The 1996 Proposition provides a method for determining each fiscal year the amount of funds available in the following fiscal year to fund capital improvement projects in addition to the amounts specifically identified for projects in the Safe Neighborhood Parks Propositions of 1992 and 1996. The recommended grant would be funded from the Excess Funds available to the Fifth Supervisorial District from Excess Funds available for specified projects.

The Board may establish additional conditions on grants of Excess Funds. The Director of Parks and Recreation would be authorized to award a grant when all applicable conditions have been met. Any funds allocated by the Board, but not encumbered by award of a grant contract in the same fiscal year, shall be available for allocation by the Board in the following fiscal year.

### **CONTRACTING PROCESS**

A Grant Project Agreement will be entered into and administered under authority delegated to the Director and pursuant to the Conservancy's Procedural Guide approved by your Board in 1997 and used since then for the administration of similar grant projects. Prior to execution, the Grant Project Agreement will be reviewed and approved as to form by County Counsel.

### **IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES**

Your Board's approval of this recommendation will authorize the Director to award a grant to the MRCA for the Lopez Canyon Acquisition and Development Project. It will have no impact on any other District-funded projects.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION**

All public agency projects funded by the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District are required to comply with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as a condition of the grant. The lead agency is responsible for preparing the appropriate environmental documentation for the project. The MRCA is the lead agency for the Lopez Canyon Acquisition and Development Project.

The proposed administrative actions are not subject to CEQA in that the actions do not meet the definition of a project according to Sections 15378 (b) (4)(5) of the State CEQA Guidelines, because the actions are administrative activities for government grants, which by their terms do not involve any commitments to any specific projects which may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment.

The Honorable Board of Directors  
October 7, 2008  
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**CONCLUSION**

Please instruct the Executive Officer-Clerk of the Board to return one conformed copy of this action to the Chief Executive Office, Capital Projects Division, and to the Department of Parks and Recreation.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Russ Guiney for".

Russ Guiney  
Director, Parks and Recreation

Attachments (4)

RG:IV:LB:REGIONALPARKANDOPENSPOCEDISTRICT(LOPEZ CANYON BL)

c: Chief Executive Officer  
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors (22)  
County Counsel

**MRCA**  
**5th SD Acquisition of Alonzo Equestrian Center**  
**July 29, 2008**

APN	Project Name/Location	Acres
2581-012-005	Alonzo Equestrian Center - Lopez Canyon	40.00
2581-012-007	Alonzo Equestrian Center - Lopez Canyon	5.00
2581-012-008	Alonzo Equestrian Center - Lopez Canyon	25.00
2581-012-009	Alonzo Equestrian Center - Lopez Canyon	4.48
2581-012-010	Alonzo Equestrian Center - Lopez Canyon	5.00
2581-012-011	Alonzo Equestrian Center - Lopez Canyon	14.96
2581-013-006	Alonzo Equestrian Center - Lopez Canyon	7.17
2581-013-008	Alonzo Equestrian Center - Lopez Canyon	4.54
2581-013-009	Alonzo Equestrian Center - Lopez Canyon	16.18
2581-013-010	Alonzo Equestrian Center - Lopez Canyon	3.33
<b>Total Acreage</b>		<b>125.66</b>







DEAN D. EFSTATHIOU, Acting Director

# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"*

900 SOUTH FREMONT AVENUE  
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91803-1331  
Telephone: (626) 458-5100  
<http://dpw.lacounty.gov>

Attachment B

RECEIVED

AUG 21 2008

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:  
P.O. BOX 1460  
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91802-1460

IN REPLY PLEASE  
REFER TO FILE: LD-4

August 13, 2008

TO: Russ Guiney  
Director of Parks and Recreation

Attention Ilona Volkmann

FROM: Dean D. Efstathiou *DE*  
Acting Director of Public Works

### SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY'S REQUEST FOR NEW ACQUISITION PROJECTS

As requested, we reviewed the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy's list of proposed acquisition projects (Alonzo Equestrian Center) as it relates to construction of any highway depicted on the County of Los Angeles Highway Plan and the impacts to the Solid Waste Management System in the County of Los Angeles. The following are our comments:

1. APN Nos. 2581-012-009, 2581-013-006, 2581-013-008, and 2581-013-009 located in the unincorporated County area, surrounds Lopez Canyon Road, a limited secondary highway on the Los Angeles County Highway Plan, and requires 20 feet of additional right-of-way dedication from centerline plus slope easements to accommodate future widening of Lopez Canyon Road. Additional engineering studies will be needed to determine the limits of the slope easements.
2. APN No. 2581-012-011, located in the unincorporated County area, fronts Lopez Canyon Road and requires 20 feet of additional right-of-way dedication plus slope easements along the property frontage on Lopez Canyon Road. Additional engineering studies will be needed to determine the limits of the slopes easements.
3. APN Nos. 2581-012-005, 2581-012-007, 2581-012-008, 2581-012-010, and 2581-013-010 are also located in the unincorporated County area and do not impact County highways.

Russ Guiney  
August 13, 2008  
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4. Based on the information provided, we have found that the proposed acquisition of the properties listed below will not negatively impact the solid waste management system.

<u>APN</u>	<u>APN</u>	<u>APN</u>
2581-012-005	2581-012-007	2581-012-008
2581-012-009	2581-012-010	2581-012-011
2581-013-006	2581-013-008	2581-013-009
2581-013-010		

However, please note that APN Nos. 2581-013-009 and 2581-013-010 appear to be within 200 feet of active, abandoned, or idle oil or gas well(s). The Los Angeles County Building Code, Section 110.4, requires that buildings or structures adjacent to or within 200 feet of active, abandoned, or idle oil or gas well(s) be protected against methane gas intrusion. For construction of any enclosed structures on this site, Public Works' Environmental Programs Division must be contacted for issuance of necessary permits.

I hope this information is helpful. If you have any questions on highway impacts, please contact Steve Burger of our Land Development Division at (626) 458-4943 or by e-mail at [sburger@dpw.lacounty.gov](mailto:sburger@dpw.lacounty.gov). For Solid Waste Management System impacts, please contact Siyavash Araumi of our Environmental Programs Division at (626) 458-4991 or by e-mail at [saraumi@dpw.lacounty.gov](mailto:saraumi@dpw.lacounty.gov).

JC:ca

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DEAN D. EFSTATHIOU, Acting Director

# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"*

900 SOUTH FREMONT AVENUE  
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Attachment C

ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:  
P.O. BOX 1460  
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91802-1460

September 9, 2008

IN REPLY PLEASE  
REFER TO FILE:

LD-0

TO: Russ Guiney  
Director of Parks and Recreation

Attention Ilona Volkmann

FROM: Dean D. Efsthioiu *[Signature]*  
Acting Director of Public Works

### **SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY'S REQUEST FOR NEW ACQUISITION PROJECTS**

This is a follow up from our August 13, 2008, memo. This update is based on additional information provided by the Department of Regional Planning related to the Housing Element and the General Plan Update (see attached).

Regional Planning reports that the proposed land use designations and zoning for the properties along Lopez Canyon Road and Kagel Canyon Road will not result in a level of development to warrant the roadway classification of a Limited Secondary Highway. Therefore, we will be proceeding to recommend that Lopez Canyon Road and Kagel Canyon Road be downgraded to local collector streets and removed from the Highway Plan. There will not be any future impacts to the subject parcels as a result of any development or construction of any highway depicted on the Highway Plan.

I hope this information is helpful. If you have any additional questions, please contact Steve Burger of our Land Development Division at (626) 458-4943 or by e-mail at [sburger@dpw.lacounty.gov](mailto:sburger@dpw.lacounty.gov).

DH:la

P:\ldpub\ADMIN\DENNIS\SANTA MONICA MOUNTAIN CONSERVANCY-PARKREC 07-29-2008 (Rev#1dh).doc

Attach.

cc: Department of Regional Planning (Mark Herwick)

The Housing Element and the General Plan Update do not anticipate any significant development along Lopez Canyon Road or Kagel Canyon Road. The entirety of Lopez Canyon Road and Kagel Canyon Road are within hillside management (25% slope or greater) and close to 80% of the length of these roads are within the National Forest. Hillside management constrains development potential and development within the National Forest is severely limited and must be coordinated with the Forest Service. There may be incremental residential development in the Kagel Canyon community along Kagel Canyon Road, but nowhere else along its entirety. There will be no development along the entirety of Lopez Canyon Road, except for possible industrial development to the west of it close to the City of Los Angeles. Therefore, with these considerations in mind, it is not necessary to retain the Limited Secondary Highway designation for Lopez Canyon Road and Kagel Canyon Road as proposals on the Highway Plan. The following information specifies the development expectations along Lopez Canyon Road and Kagel Canyon Road.

#### Lopez Canyon Road

Where the Department regulates land use outside of the National Forest, southerly, Lopez Canyon Road passes through 80 acres of Rural (R), then bisects about 60 acres of Rural (R) and Industrial (I), and is adjacent to Industrial (I) for about 2400 feet until its terminus with the City of Los Angeles city limit. The associated zoning is A-2-2, R-R-2, and M1.5. The Plan density for Rural (R) is 1 unit/acre and housing is not encouraged in Industrial (I). The Plan potential for the approximately 110 Rural (R) acres where Lopez Canyon passes through or is adjacent to is 110 units, however, this would be dramatically reduced by the provisions of hillside management and other environmental constraints such as fire hazards, seismicity, and liquefaction.

#### Kagel Canyon Road

In the area outside of the National Forest boundary, southerly from the National Forest boundary to the City of Los Angeles city limits, Kagel Canyon Road passes through the Kagel Canyon community (about 115 acres), which has a land use category of Rural Community (RC) and zoning of R1. Within the Kagel Canyon community there are four (4) parcels with commercial zoning. This community has a clustered single family non-urban settlement pattern and serves as a rural bedroom community to the City of Los Angeles. The Rural Community category has some flexibility with regard to density, but it is close to 1 unit/acre to maintain a rural character. The Kagel Canyon community has effectively reached its Plan build-out, yet, some incremental single family home growth in the Kagel Canyon community may occur, however it will be constrained by the provisions of hillside management and other environmental constraints such as fire hazards, seismicity, and liquefaction.

#### Summary

Based on the very limited development anticipated along Lopez Canyon Road and Kagel Canyon Road is appropriate to retain these roads at their current service widths and not to propose them as Limited Secondary Highways on the Highway Plan.



Los Angeles County  
Department of Regional Planning

*Planning for the Challenges Ahead*



Bruce W. McClendon FAICP  
Director of Planning

Date: September 3, 2008

To: Ilona Volkmann  
District Administrator  
Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District

From: Nooshin Paidar, AICP *NP*  
Supervising Regional Planner  
Land Development Coordinating Center  
Department of Regional Planning

**REGIONAL PLANNING DEPARTMENT REVIEW: Santa Monica Mountains  
Conservancy's Request For New Acquisition Projects, properties at Lopez Canyon in the  
Angeles National Forest, July 2008**

Pursuant to your request, my staff has researched the attached list of proposal parcels for acquisition.

All of the properties have an Antelope Valley Area Plan category of "O-NF" (National Forest). All properties are zoned "A-2-5" (Heavy Agriculture- 5 Acre Minimum Required Area). The proposed acquisitions meet with the goals and objectives of the Community Plan and underlying zoning.

Please be informed that there is a pending civil lawsuit between private individuals associated with the property with the APN 2581-013-008. The County is not a party in this lawsuit. We have consulted with County Counsel regarding the information which we are providing.

Should you have any questions, please contact me or Ms. Alice Wong of my staff at (213) 974-6470.

NP:aw